



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
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Peter McWalters  
Commissioner

Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2004 9:43 AM  
To: MIDPRIN-L@ride.ri.net  
Subject: Initial Guidance for High School Regulations - Section 6.0 High School Restructuring

To: Superintendents and Principals

From: Peter McWalters, Commissioner

Subject: Initial Guidance for High School Regulations - Section 6.0 High School Restructuring

Date: April 16, 2004

Enclosed you will find the third document of the initial guidance for the Regulations of the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Regarding Public High Schools and Ensuring Literacy for All Students Entering High School. It clarifies the intent of the high school restructuring - Section 6.0 of the regulations. Districts and schools are advised to use this guidance to inform their efforts as they comply with the requirements of Section 6.0. The content and resources within should be used to assess the current state, to strategize for systemic change, and to evaluate improvement efforts. Furthermore, districts and schools must consider the two companion initial guidance documents, Section 4.0 regarding Literacy and Section 5.0 regarding Graduation by Proficiency, to develop complementary, fully-integrated programs and services that meet the needs of all students.

As a strategy for Section 6.1, "Requirement for Personalized Learning Environments", this guidance outlines six action steps. Each step includes a descriptive narrative providing direction and information. It recommends that personalized learning environments be constructed within the infrastructure of a comprehensive school-counseling program that addresses the academic, career and personal/social domains of student development. Within "Action Step 4" are detailed images of the suggested approaches delineated in the regulations.

The expectations for Section 6.2, "Professional Development and Common Planning Time" are centered in two major ideas:

- Well-designed and well-documented professional development of all certified staff (minimally 15 hours) in the areas of literacy, graduation by proficiency, and/or personalization

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- Structured, regular, embedded common planning time during which teachers and other educators work cooperatively to improve student achievement, especially of those students in the highest need

Professional development and common planning time must improve teacher knowledge and skills as it fosters collegiality, collaboration and a shared responsibility for student success. Teachers must be active participants in the planning, implementation and evaluation of professional development and common planning time.

Section 6.3, "Advisory Structure" provides evidence of the benefits of an advisory program where each student is known well by at least one adult member of the school. Various types of advisory structures exist and schools must examine their own unique needs in establishing an advisory program. Several national models for advisory structures are identified in the bibliography/resources of this guidance.

RIDE will continue to assist districts and schools in their initiatives that respond to the Regents' Regulations. Statewide topical networks, including those supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Graduation by Proficiency Grant, will offer collaborative learning experiences for continuous improvement. Additional information will be provided by periodic briefings and updates, as well as announcements of professional-development opportunities.